

## MISCELLANEOUS.

### MEMORIAL ADDRESSES IN JAPAN.

In Japan the custom prevails that on a memorial day the spirit of the dead is addressed personally, and this custom is considered very impressive by foreigners who have witnessed such ceremonies.

We learn from the *Japanese Evangelist* that the Japanese Christians continue their practice after conversion, and the *Evangelist* finds nothing un-Christian in the custom. It says in commenting on this memorial ceremony:

"There are those who affirm that it shows clearly that survivors believe in the real individual existence of the spirit addressed. We have often consulted Japanese on this point and have been informed that what is said on such occasions, though actually addressed to the spirit of the departed, is intended to serve as solace for bereaved relatives. No public addresses to the spirit of the dead are allowed in Protestant Churches. At Catholic funerals they occasionally are given. A very beautiful French oration of this kind was published in the columns of the *Japan Mail* a few years ago. Japanese addresses delivered at memorial services usually contain a short sketch of the life of the deceased. The July number of the *Universalist*, the organ of the Christian Progressives, contains two addresses to the spirit of the late Dr. Cate."

As an instance we quote from the *Japan Mail* some extracts from an address made to the spirit of Dr. Cate who seems to have been a beloved missionary teacher and leader:

"How can we who have been taught and led by you fail to be stimulated by your example to do all we can to carry out your wishes? When you fell asleep, we were given strength. Pray note this in the spirit land.... Be at rest. The liberality, the sympathy, the patience, the many fine traits of character which your life taught us, along with your departed spirit, will ever abide with us. You will remain our teacher for all time. You are not dead. You live and work among us still. Mourn not your bodiless state, for the strength of your spirit is yet great. Let this comfort you in the other world."

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### BOOK REVIEWS AND NOTES.

A LIST OF THE WRITINGS OF WILLIAM TORREY HARRIS, FORMER U. S. COMMISSIONER OF EDUCATION. By *Henry Ridgely Evans*. Washington: Gov't Printing Office, 1909.

Henry Ridgely Evans has contributed an important chapter to the 1907 report of the United States Commissioner of Education. It deals with pub-

lished articles and addresses of former United States Commissioner William Torrey Harris, beginning with a brief biographical note and concluding with a first-class subject index. The chapter is a tribute to Mr. Harris's scholarship and high place in the history of public instruction. It is also a model of accuracy and simplicity in the plan of its arrangement and subject index, for which Mr. Evans is to have full credit.

The articles are numbered consecutively from 1 to 479, and arranged chronologically beginning with the year 1866, when Mr. Harris was a teacher in the public schools of St. Louis, Mo., and continuing thereafter during the years of his service in the Department of Public Instruction at Washington until he resigned his government position in order to devote his whole time to literary work. He is now editor of Appleton's International Education Series.

This plan of arrangement allows for the addition of forthcoming articles as they may appear, and permits a comparison of Mr. Harris's earlier with his more mature utterances on methods in education and philosophy. The full subject index is unusually good; it not only indicates the topics treated under each caption, but these are selected with such understanding of the writer's point of view that even the most unpracticed student will be able to use the list to his own great convenience and instruction. The economy of using numbers for reference to the articles, instead of titles or abbreviations is very apparent. Altogether, the chapter is a good bit of work, and far more interesting than the usual public document.

SCRITTI E FRAMMENTI DEL MAGO DEL NORD (JOHANN GEORG HAMANN). A cura di Roberto G. Assagioli. Naples: Francesco Perrella, 1908, Pp. 184.

Roberto G. Assagioli has written an attractive little volume under the title *Scritti e frammenti del mago del nord* in which he publishes an Italian translation of the most interesting writings of Johann Georg Hamann, a German skeptic, who lived at the time of Goethe and Kant, and was generally known under the name of "the Magus of the North." An introduction about Hamann gives the necessary explanation concerning the life and philosophy of this interesting and strange thinker.

The author of the article "An Evening with C. C. Foster" in the April number of *The Open Court*, who signs himself "A Skeptic," informs us that he was mistaken as to the middle name of Mr. Foster. The man is not "C. C." but "Chas. H." Foster, whom the author knew pretty well from childhood. The anecdote (as we think was generally inferred) relates to the same medium who is the subject of "An Incident in the Life of a Medium," in the February number.

The continuation of Dr. Carus's article "Christianity as the Pleroma" is postponed until the July number in order that "Some Fallacies of the Peacemakers" may be inserted before the occasion which gave rise to it is too far in the past.